REMARKS

BY

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It's a pleasure to be here. At this time last year I had lunch in this room in connection with the law school graduation. I was about to take on my responsibilities as Director of Central Intelligence, and I was very much looking forward to it. A year later I must admit I'm still perplexed by many of the acronyms we in government have managed to concoct over the years. NFIB, TTAC, CARG, and AVAD just don't come naturally to me yet, but I'm working on it. Once, at a meeting of our foreign intelligence program managers, the acronyms were just rolling out, and Bob Gates was at my ear, translating. Sometimes he didn't know what the acronyms meant, and we would stop and ask. Lenny Perroots got off about five in one sentence, and he turned to me and said: "I'm sorry, but after a while these are just peaches and cream." And I said: "You mean P and C, don't you?" I told that story somewhere else and it ended up in the newspaper. So Lenny sent me a book about an inch thick, filled with official U.S. Army acronyms. I'm working my way through it.

Not too long ago, somebody gave me a lapel button that says: "My job is so secret that even I don't know what I'm doing." Those of you familiar with the complexities of the intelligence business can well understand why I might feel that way once in a while.

My good friend, General Vernon Walters, former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and now Ambassador to the United Nations, describes the view many Americans have not only of secrecy, but of intelligence in general. "Americans," he observed, "have always had an ambivalent attitude toward

intelligence. When they feel threatened, they want a lot of it, and when they don't, they tend to regard the whole thing as somewhat immoral." I think General Walters' observation is on the mark. And we must understand this in our dealings with the American people and their representatives in the Congress.

Americans have certainly had a lot to say about intelligence over the past year. The Iran-Contra affair, painful as it may have been, has shown us the extent to which CIA, Congress, and foreign policy are -- and should be -- interrelated. I'd like to talk today about the role the CIA plays in supporting and implementing foreign policy -- which is not the same as making policy. I also want to discuss the changing nature of congressional oversight, and the importance of building public trust in the Central Intelligence Agency's mission. Americans, in my view, need to believe that this agency and other government agencies are responsive, accountable, and not above the law.

The CIA's primary role is to provide support to our nation's policymakers. We do that by providing intelligence that is useful, timely, and objective.

Today our government depends heavily on useful, accurate intelligence. Intelligence to formulate and implement our foreign policy, intelligence to verify the arms agreements that we have signed, and intelligence to understand both the military capabilities and the intentions of our adversaries. Intelligence is very important today as we approach an INF agreement, and will perhaps be even more important in determining whether we can verify a START agreement. Not too long ago I testified before Congress on the Intelligence Community's ability to monitor the Soviet Union's compliance with the

provisions of the INF treaty -- an area in which intelligence is vital. In fact, I can take that statement one step further and say that intelligence will be the central focus of any discussion on a START agreement. In this morning's newspapers we can see some indications of backpedaling, which are an outgrowth of concern on the part of some Senators that we will be unable to do the things that build confidence in the verification process of the INF treaty -- a treaty that just three months ago people were saying would almost certainly be adopted without major objection.

Intelligence must also be timely. Last summer, I took my friend Bobby Inman's advice and visited NORAD in Colorado Springs and SAC headquarters in Omaha. These are the sites of the principal early-warning systems for our national defense. A visit there can't help but make one aware of the critical importance of early and accurate intelligence for our national defense. Given the speed at which nuclear missiles are able to travel, when we think in terms of survival warnings, we think not in terms of days or weeks, but minutes.

Not only must intelligence be useful and timely, it is important that the information that is collected be developed in an objective way. The Director of Central Intelligence and the people who analyze information must be seen as giving the best estimates, not to "cook the books" or to shape or influence policy, but to provide policymakers with the kind of information upon which they can make wise decisions in the interests of our national security.

Because the quality and objectivity of the intelligence we provide is so important, I have taken a number of steps to ensure that the Intelligence Community preserves its objectivity and protects its integrity. We have and will continue to "tell it like it is," avoiding bias as much as we can. On

the other side of the coin, policymakers may not like the message they hear from us, especially if they have a different point of view or have already acted before receiving our information. My position is that in the preparation of intelligence judgments, particularly in National Intelligence Estimates, we will provide them for the use of policymakers. They can be used in whole or in part. They can be ignored, torn up, or thrown away, but they may not be changed. From time to time, our program managers have felt some heat from above. I think it is important that I protect the integrity of the product and allow our analysts to seek the truth and make their estimates in the best way they can.

I think this kind of insistence on objectivity may be one of the most significant contributions that I could make in galvanizing a cohesive Intelligence Community without compromising the integrity of the individual analysts or program managers.

In addition to providing intelligence that is useful, timely, and objective, the CIA plays a role in implementing foreign policy. This is done through its covert action programs. Covert capability, essential in our foreign policy, provides needed support for liberation movements, often provides support to governments, and allows us to work in collaboration with those governments who do not wish, for legitimate political reasons of their own, to have the U.S. role and involvement publicly known. Although covert actions traditionally claim a very small portion of the Intelligence Community's resources -- only about 3 percent -- these activities are the focus of the greatest congressional and public attention.

And Congress is very interested in what the CIA does. Not long ago, I addressed a group of retired intelligence officers, and they recalled the days when no classified papers went from the CIA to either house of Congress and the only classified briefings to congressional committees were given by the Director himself, or with the Director present. At one time, the Senate Appropriations Committee had one cleared staffer, the House Appropriations Committee one or two. Today, four congressional committees closely examine the Agency's activities, and the number of individuals who see classified material far exceeds the one or two of the past.

Fifteen years ago, the CIA gave 175 briefings to Congress. Last year, we gave over 1,000 briefings on a variety of topics. These topics included arms control, Soviet weapons, the Persian Gulf situation, the various conflicts in Central America, and even the spread of AIDS in Africa. In the last year, the CIA sent over 5,000 intelligence reports to Congress.

In addition to briefings and papers, we also testify, and testify, and testify. I have spent a fair amount of time on the Hill, lately, myself. In fact, I have begun to refer to Capitol Hill as my "home away from home." My top executives tell me they spend about 25 percent of their time dealing with Congress, while I estimate that -- on an average -- 15 percent of my time is spent testifying on the Hill and meeting with members of Congress.

Because I know of the need to be absolutely candid with Congress, and the responsibility that intelligence professionals have to protect sources and methods, I have established guidelines governing our dealings with Congress. And I have made it absolutely clear that in dealing with Congress there is no excuse for deception.

There may be some questions that the Agency officials who brief Congress will have to refer back to me. Some of the questions will work their way up to me, and I am prepared to take the heat or work out arrangements with Congress. But we will not give half-answers or around-the-corner answers. That's not the way I operate. If there is a problem, we will say there is a problem, and that we cannot answer the question at this time. We may ultimately have to provide an answer, and it may mean negotiation. But we will not leave the Congress feeling that in some way anyone in the CIA has been disingenuous in dealing with them. I think tension between Congress and the executive branch will always exist, but we will be able to work it out if there is an element of trust in the honesty of the statements we make.

I firmly believe that the oversight responsibilities exercised by Congress are both necessary and beneficial. There must be a dependable system of oversight and accountability which builds, rather than erodes, trust between those who have the intelligence responsibility and those who are the elected representatives of the American people.

There are, however, instances where information pertaining to national security must not be released outside the narrow reach of the congressional oversight committees: this includes information that could jeopardize lives, or information that threatens the means by which we protect ourselves. The disclosure of sophisticated technical systems or cryptographic information alerts a hostile nation to the need to develop countermeasures and can seriously hamper our intelligence collection efforts. In signals intelligence, for example, if one sensitive piece of information is published, it could put an entire intelligence collection system that took years to

develop out of use. An enormous amount of time, planning, and money would be required to replace it, and the loss of intelligence collection in the meantime could be formidable.

Information that is published need not even be accurate to do irreparable harm to our intelligence capabilities. Let me give you an example. Not too long ago there was a brief flurry of news stories purporting to be based on classified intelligence -- information indicating that the Soviets had carried out certain military experiments. The stories were largely inaccurate. Yet comments on the situation -- again mostly inaccurate -- were attributed to a number of U.S. officials. Some of these officials confirmed the story, one denied it, and yet another corrected the initial story. The statements by these officials served to heighten speculation and to sustain public focus on matters involving highly sensitive U.S. intelligence collection techniques.

After these stories were published, the Soviets took countermeasures which limited our access to this type of intelligence. In short, even though the information discussed by these U.S. officials was incorrect, the net result was a further loss for U.S. intelligence.

Regrettably, some view the Intelligence Community's obligation to protect intelligence sources and methods as a threat to a free press. But I have found that most members of the press are more than willing to cooperate when we have clearly stated the reasons why certain information would jeopardize national interests.

Last fall, a reporter from a major newspaper requested a meeting with my Public Affairs Director at CIA to discuss extremely sensitive information that

had come into his possession about Middle Eastern terrorism. The CIA official advised the reporter that without any doubt his information, if published, could endanger a valuable source of intelligence and could result in loss of life. The reporter agreed to withhold the story, and to this day, has not published it. If the reporter were ever to believe that the CIA official had dissembled, we would have lost that trust that is so important in dealing with the public and the Congress.

There have been other instances in which the press has withheld stories or written them in a way that preserved the confidentiality of intelligence sources. This cooperation is a result of the credibility and good faith we have worked to establish with the press.

Our policy with the media -- like our policy with Congress -- is to be both candid and responsive. By candid I don't mean that we tell them everything they ask to hear; I mean that we will indicate clearly what we will tell them and what we will not tell them. We frequently schedule background briefings for reporters who request information on international developments. And if we cannot answer a specific question from the media, we will tell them that we cannot answer it and will not try to invent a response.

In an interview with Newsweek, I made the point that it is important to realize that in this organization, we are going to have to take risks, but the risks have to be associated with certain kinds of principles -- principles with which the public is comfortable. The risks must not put us afoul of the Constitution or our laws.

A lifetime of experience in the law has convinced me that the integrity of government organizations can only be maintained by insisting upon compliance

with laws and rules -- rules imposed to ensure our citizens that we are, indeed, accountable. Obviously, there are places in the world where our laws do not help our agents, who are acting under our mission to collect intelligence, but this is not an excuse to evade or avoid the laws of our own country. We can and we do operate within them, and we are fully accountable to them.

We also believe that it is essential that the American people know and understand the role of intelligence and oversight. In addition to maintaining a relationship with the press, CIA officers often speak to academic groups and other organizations. It is important that we continue the strong relationship we have established with the academic community. The officer-in-residence program at Georgetown University is a fine example of how the Agency and academia can benefit when such cooperation exists.

The challenges that we face -- terrorism, narcotics, technology transfer, and verifying arms agreements -- all argue the necessity of attracting top people into intelligence. We are fortunate in that last year, over 100,000 men and women expressed interest in working for the Central Intelligence Agency. Applications come in at the rate of 1,000 per month from qualified men and women, and I wish we could hire them all. You have no doubt read about the protests on some college campuses when CIA recruits. Interestingly enough, these protests and the publicity they generate often work in our favor. Our recruitment centers are inundated with resumes after campus demonstrations. But we're not responsible for the campus demonstrations.

I mentioned before that in an organization like this, there is a need to take risks. I hope that we continue to attract those best suited to carry out

our mission -- people who are risk takers but not risk seekers. People who are dedicated and responsive to our law and discipline. People who understand and play by the rules. People to whom fame and fortune are not particularly a necessary part of their life, but who can find in our work an avenue to pursue their highest aspirations for a safer and a better world.

With such people we can continue to provide the intelligence that policymakers need, observing the rules of oversight and accountability that both the Congress and the members of the Intelligence Community have a right to expect. This is what you would want of us, what all American people would want of us, and we are doing our very best to supply it.

Thank you.